

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

**Please amend the Specification as follows:**

Please replace page 3 of the specification with the page attached hereto. Both a clean version of the amended page, as well as a marked up version are submitted herewith as per 37 CFR 1.125.

acids in the peptide linker is selected from the group consisting of (Gly, Ser, Asn, Thr and Ala; the peptide linker includes a Gly-Ser element.

In a preferred embodiment, the fusion protein includes a peptide linker and the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula (Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)<sub>y</sub> (SEQ. ID 1) wherein y is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8. Preferably, the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula (Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)<sub>3</sub> (SEQ. ID 1). Preferably, the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)<sub>4</sub>-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3).

In a preferred embodiment, the fusion protein includes a peptide linker and the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula (Ser-Ser-Ser-Ser-Gly)<sub>y</sub> (SEQ. ID 5 [[4]]) wherein y is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8. Preferably, the peptide linker includes a sequence having the formula ((Ser-Ser-Ser-Ser-Gly)<sub>3</sub>-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 4).

In another aspect, the invention features, an EPOa-hSA fusion protein wherein the EPOa includes amino acid residues G1n24, G1n38, G1n83 and A1a126.

In a preferred embodiment the EPOa is G1n24, G1n38, G1n83, A1a126 EPO (i.e., only amino acids 24, 38, 83, and 126 differ from wild type).

In another aspect, the invention features, an EPOa-hSA fusion protein which includes from left to right, an EPOa which includes amino acid residues G1n24, G1n38, G1n83 and Ala126, a peptide linker, e.g., a peptide linker having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)<sub>4</sub>-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3), and human serum albumin.

In a preferred embodiment the EPOa is G1n24, G1n38, G1n83, A1a126 EPO.

In a preferred embodiment the fusion protein is from left to right, G1n24, G1n38, G1n83, Ala126 EPO, a peptide linker having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)<sub>4</sub>-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3), and human serum albumin.

In another aspect, the invention features, an EPOa-hSA fusion protein which includes, from left to right, human serum albumin, a peptide linker, e.g., a peptide linker having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)<sub>34</sub>-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3), and an EPOa which includes amino acid residues G1n24, G1n38, G1n83 and Ala126.

In a preferred embodiment the EPOa is G1n24, G1n38, G1n83, Ala126 EPO.

In a preferred embodiment the fusion protein is from left to right, human serum albumin, a peptide linker having the formula ((Ser-Gly-Gly-Gly-Gly)<sub>4</sub>-Ser-Pro) (SEQ. ID 3), and G1n24, G1n38, G1n83, A1a126 EPO.